



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Sen. Cherry Introduces Legislation to Promote Better Health in Michigan

Bill calls for increased physical activity for elementary school children

LANSING—State Senator Deb Cherry (D-Burton) announces the introduction of legislation encouraging increased physical activity for elementary school children. She is supported in this announcement by members of the Legislature's Healthy Michigan Caucus.

"After attending a forum on chronic disease prevention and management earlier this year, I recognized the devastating impact chronic disease has on individuals and on our state," Sen. Cherry said. "Our modern culture and new technologies do little to promote physical activity in our children. Kids and adults alike have become very sedentary. Video games and computers have taken the place of many outdoor, physical activities. We need to encourage our children to exercise their bodies as well as their minds."

The bill, sponsored by Sen. Cherry in the Senate and Representative Stephen Adamini (D-Marquette) in the House, would require elementary schools to ensure that all pupils participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity per school day or 135 minutes of physical activity per school week.

Rep. Steve Adamini (D-Marquette) said, "The cost of treating people with chronic diseases is becoming a huge problem for many states, including Michigan. Treatment of chronic diseases in Michigan accounts for 65 to 70 percent of our health care costs. We can't be fiscally sound if we're not physically healthy. If we promote healthy lifestyles and increased physical activity to our children when they are still young, we can start them on the path to better health as adults."

According to federal Center for Disease Control, overweight children are being hospitalized at dramatically rising rates for diabetes, sleep apnea, and other diseases. About 13 percent of children and 14 percent of adolescents are overweight or obese, more than double the number two decades ago.

Sen. Bev Hammerstrom (R-Temperance) said, "The Healthy Michigan Caucus is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles for all Michigan residents. By embracing an appreciation of fitness and good nutrition early in life, the children of Michigan will lead healthier and happier lives. That is an accomplishment that we can all be proud of."

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The Healthy Michigan Caucus is a bipartisan, bicameral group of legislators committed to helping Michigan become more physically and fiscally healthy. Co-chairs of the Healthy Michigan Caucus include Sen. Gilda Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods), Sen. Bev Hammerstrom, Rep. Gary Newell (R-Saranac), and Rep. Steve Adamini.

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Senator Cherry is a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and is Minority Vice Chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education, and the subcommittee on Community Health.